

license fees to account for differences in fishing effort), integrating new license requirements with existing ones, and simplifying the overall licensing process and structure.

2. The Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) would consider using its existing authority to issue gear licenses. Other new licensing procedures may be flexible, considering allocation and equity issues and be implemented as necessary to conform to new fishery management plans.
3. Revenues generated by the new license sales would be directed toward fisheries management and enhancement.

#### **Evaluation Method**

Modifications to the license structure would be completed by 1995. DMF would evaluate the new structure's ability to collect data and the simplicity of license requirements.

#### **Costs and Economic Considerations**

The costs of modifying the existing marine fisheries license structure will depend on how data gathering is improved and whether new licenses are implemented. A bill to establish a license to sell fish has already been passed by the legislature. If a recreational salt water fishing license is implemented, start up funds may be needed, however, the amount of funds required will depend on how the license structure is modified. Once the license is implemented, revenues from license fees should more than offset government costs of operating and enforcing new license programs and managing data. In fact, in other states that have implemented a recreational salt water fishing license, revenues have far exceeded the cost of administering the license, and have funded data collection and research to improve recreational fishing. For example, in South Carolina, Virginia, and Florida, 5 to 10 percent of the revenues from marine recreational fishing license fees go to administration. The rest are earmarked for fisheries research, public education, enforcement, habitat protection, acquisition and other programs to benefit recreational fishing. In addition to facilitating better data collection and generating revenue to fund marine recreational fishing enhancement, revenues from the implementation of a marine recreational fishing license would help the state secure more federal Sport Fish Restoration matching funds for fisheries management enhancement.